WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Crop loss due to Monsoon failure

1761. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the dry spell in Northern India sparks fears of drought;

(b) whether Government are aware that Kharif crops like maize, groundnut and a few varieties of bajra cannot be sown, if there are rains resulting the crop losses to the tune of Rs. 1200 crores; and

(c) if so, how Government propose to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Upto 24th July, 2002, there was major deficit of rainfall in Northern India leading to appreciable deficit in cropped areas. It will be premature to estimate the losses. However, Central Government is in regular touch with the State Governments and is prepared to extend all possible assistance to the State Governments.

Projects to forecast crop production

1762. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the status of Government's project of forecasting crop production through satellite studies and land-based observations, FASAL:

(b) the reasons for the delay in the take off;

(c) by when these projects would really take off; and

(d) how the project would help the small and marginal farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) the Government is considering to implement during the Tenth Five Year Plan the project "Forecasting Agricultural Output Using Space, Agro-meteorology and Land-based Observations" (FASAL).